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RELATIONS BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE U. S.

Yesterday, the speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, laid before that body a communication from President Lincoln, covering the official correspondence between Secretary Seward and Mr. Dayton in reference to the vote of the House on Mexican affairs:

Mr. Seward to Mr. Dayton.

[EXTRACT.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, April 7, 1864.

SIR: * * * * *

I send you a copy of a resolution which passed the House of Representatives on the 4th inst., by a unanimous vote, and which declares the opposition of that body to a recognition of a monarchy in Mexico. Mr. Geoffrey has lost no time in asking an explanation of this proceeding.

It is hardly necessary, after what I have heretofore written with perfect candor for the information of France to say that this resolution truly interprets the unanimous sentiment of the people of the United States in regard to Mexico. It is, however, another and distinct question, whether the United States would think it necessary or proper to express themselves in the form adopted by the House of Representatives at this time. This is a practical and purely executive question, and the decision of it constitutionally belongs not to the House of Representatives, nor even to Congress, but to the President of the United States. You will of course take notice that the declaration made by the House of Representatives in the form of a joint resolution, which, before it can acquire the character of a legislative act, must receive, first, the concurrence of the Senate, and, secondly, the approval of the President of the United States, or, in case of his dissent, the renewed assent of both Houses of Congress, to be expressed by a majority of two thirds of each body.

While the President receives the declaration of the House of Representatives with the profound respect to which it is entitled as an exposition of its views upon the grave and important subject, he directs that you inform the Government of France that he does not at present contemplate any departure from the policy which this Government has hitherto pursued in regard to the war which exists between France and Mexico. It is hardly necessary to say that the proceedings of the House of Representatives were adopted upon suggestions arising within itself, and not upon any communication of the Executive Department, and that the French Government would be seasonably apprised of any change of policy upon this subject, which the President might at any future time think it proper to adopt.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,
WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Mr. Dayton to Mr. Seward.

No. 454 * [EXTRACT.]

PARIS, April 22, 1864.

SIR: I visited M. Drouyn de Lhuys yesterday at the Department of Foreign Affairs. The first words he addressed to me on entering the room were, "Do you bring us peace or bring us war?" I asked him to what he referred, and he said he referred more immediately to those resolutions recently passed by

Congress, in reference to the invasion of Mexico by the French, and the establishment of Maximilian upon the throne of that country. I said to him in reply, that I did not think France had a right to infer that we were about to make war against her on account of anything contained in those resolutions; that they embodied nothing more than had been constantly held out to the French Government from the beginning. That I had always represented to the Government here that any action upon their part interfering with the form of government in Mexico would be looked upon with dissatisfaction in our country, and they could not expect us to be in haste to acknowledge a monarchical government, built upon the foundation of a republic which was our next neighbor. That I had reason to believe you had held the same language to the French Minister in the United States. This allegation he did not seem to deny, but obviously received the resolutions in question as a serious step upon our part; and I am told that the leading Secessionists here build largely upon these resolutions, as a means of fomenting ill feeling between this country and some others and ourselves. Mr. Mason and his Secretary have gone to Brussels to confer with Mr. Dudley Mann, who is their commissioner at that place. Mr. Slidell, it is said, was to have gone to Austria, although he has not yet got off.

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I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WM. L. DAYTON.

Hon. WM. H. SEWARD, Secretary of State, &c.

Mr. Dayton to Mr. Seward.

No. 461. [EXTRACT.]

PARIS, May 2, 1864.

SIR: Immediately upon the receipt of your dispatch, No. 525, I applied to M. Drouyn de Lhuys for a special interview, which was granted for Saturday last. I then said that I knew that the French Government had felt some anxiety in respect to the resolution which had recently passed the House of Representatives, in reference to Mexico; and inasmuch as I had just received a copy of that resolution, together with the views of the President of the United States, I begged, if agreeable, to read to him your dispatch, in reference to the latter. To this he assented, and, as the shortest and most satisfactory mode, following out my instructions, I read to him that entire portion of your despatch which applies to this subject, stating, at the same time, that I thought it was a remarkable illustration of the frankness and straightforwardness of the President. When the reading was closed, M. Drouyn de Lhuys expressed his gratification, and, after asking some questions in regard to the effect of laying a resolution upon the table in the Senate, the conversation terminated.

The extreme sensitiveness which was manifested by this Government when the resolution of the House of Representatives was first brought to its knowledge has, to a considerable extent at least, subsided.

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I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WM. L. DAYTON.

Hon. WM. H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Dayton.

No. 542. [EXTRACT.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

WASHINGTON, May 9, 1864.

SIR: Your dispatch of April 22d, No. 454, has been received.

What you have said to M. Drouyn de Lhuys, on the subject of the resolution of the House of Representatives concerning Mexico,

as you have repeated it, is entirely approved. The resolution yet remains unacted upon in the Senate.

Mr. Corwin was to leave Vera Cruz on the 3d instant, under the leave of absence granted to him by this department on the 8th of August last.

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I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WM. H. SEWARD

WM. L. DAYTON, Esq., etc.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Dayton.

No. 561. [EXTRACT.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

WASHINGTON, May 21, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your dispatch of May 2d, No. 461, and to approve of your proceedings therein mentioned. We learn that Mr. Corwin, our Minister Plenipotentiary to Mexico, is at Havana, on his return to the United States, under leave of absence.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WM. H. SEWARD.

WM. L. DAYTON, Esq., etc.

The message and accompanying documents were referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

The accounts from Fortress Monroe, of military operations, on the James river, telegraphed to the Northern papers, are of such a contradictory character that but little credence is given them: for instance, in the dispatch dated on the 24th, and published this morning, it is asserted in one paragraph that "the Confederates have been largely reinforced by drafts from North and South Carolina, and from Lee's army," while a paragraph just below reads: "It is reported that nearly one-half of Beauregard's forces left him last night, and marched in the direction of Richmond—for what purpose is not known, probably to reinforce Lee." The same dispatch says: "The rebels have made nine attacks upon our entrenchments and have been repulsed each time."

Notwithstanding Captain Street reports "the Rappahannock river to be clear of torpedoes from its mouth to the wharf at Fredericksburg, and that transports can now reach Fredericksburg with supplies to the army and to convey the wounded North"—the Washington Star of yesterday evening says—"The gunboats are yet engaged in removing torpedoes and other obstructions found in the Rappahannock. The Keyport running against one of these obstructions on her downward trip, stove in her wheelhouse, and sprung a leak, but not sufficient to disable her."

The Philadelphia Inquirer says that the present high price of beef, is entirely owing to speculators, and a combination among a few persons who have control over the eastern markets. It says if there is a concert of action on the subject among housekeepers, that the monopoly can be broken down so disastrously to those who sustain it, that the lesson will be remembered for years.

Gold in New York, yesterday, 184